



State of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations  
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## NEWS RELEASE

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### **Education Department, URI Release Fifth Edition of *Information Works!***

PROVIDENCE—The R.I. Department of Elementary and Secondary Education and the National Center on Public Education and Social Policy (NCPE) at the University of Rhode Island have released *Information Works! 2002: Measuring Rhode Island Schools for Change*.

The book contains a detailed report on every public school and school district in the state, as well as statewide statistical information. Each report includes the results of the 2001 state assessments, socioeconomic data (poverty rates and racial and ethnic characteristics of the school and district), a snapshot of life in the school (attendance rates, reports from students and parents about their perceptions of school climate), and financial data on school spending.

This is the fifth edition of *Information Works!* For the first time, the book includes a list of school-performance categories, which classifies schools as either high performing, moderately performing, or low performing. In addition, the book shows which schools are improving and which are not, in reading, writing, and mathematics.

The book also includes the so-called “value-added” charts, which compare the performance of the students at each school with the performance of similar students statewide. It’s a way of using statistics to level the playing field and enable fair comparisons among schools. These charts show that some schools may be succeeding with students from a difficult socioeconomic background; other schools, with the same type of student population, may not be succeeding.

“*Information Works!* is our state report card,” said Peter McWalters, the commissioner of elementary and secondary education. “With its publication, Rhode Islanders have a wealth of good information readily available about our entire public-school system. We hope that parents and others in our community use this information to help us reach our goal: improvement in every school and proficiency for every student.”

The book is being distributed statewide to schools and libraries. Copies are available for \$30 from NCPE at URI, 80 Washington St., Providence 02903. The entire book, along with supplementary data, is available on line at [www.infoworks.ride.uri.edu](http://www.infoworks.ride.uri.edu)

Note to media: Staff members at the Education Department will be available all week to answer inquiries about the charts, tables, and data contained within *Information Works!*